

APPLICATION AND PROJECT REVIEW INFORMATION

APPLICATION AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

The Committee will conduct two funding rounds during 2010, as follows.

| | <u>Round 1</u> | <u>Round 2</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Project Eligibility Forms due | Jan 8 | Aug 9 |
| Completed Applications due | Feb 8 | Sep 08 |
| Estimated date of CPC recommends | Apr 21 | Nov 17 |

As indicated below, committee recommendations must be reviewed by the Mayor and approved by two votes of the City Council, normally taken at two separate meetings. Approved projects must then go through a city process of payment authorization. Each of these final steps adds a somewhat unpredictable delay between the time that the CPC recommendations are made and the time that approved projects are actually funded.

The committee may, under highly extraordinary circumstances, vote to accept applications that, because of market opportunities or other deadlines, require consideration outside of the normal funding cycles. Potential applicants who believe that their circumstances call for such unusual action may contact the committee chair to discuss the possible submission of an off-cycle application.

APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The following four-step process describes the committee's procedures for reviewing and recommending proposals, and the city's procedures for final approval and funding.

This section also details the precise information that the committee needs in order to evaluate projects fully and to set priorities among them. As applicants should be aware, levels of funding requested far exceed the funds available. In this competitive climate, only applications that arrive in complete form and that include all of the detailed information requested will be considered by the Committee. Applicants who submit a late or incomplete application should expect the committee to return the application for completion and resubmission at a future funding round. Applicants are encouraged to contact CPC members and/or CPC staff to discuss project proposals.

Step 1. Determine Project Eligibility

Because of the complexities of the CPA law, the committee requires all project applicants to begin the application process by submitting a one-page Project Eligibility Determination Form. No funding application will be accepted unless the Project Eligibility Determination Form has been submitted and approved.

Applicants should refer to Appendix E, Community Preservation Fund Allowable Use Table when filling out the Project Eligibility Determination Form. This information comes from the Department of Revenue and contains the most up-to-date information on both the definitions of the four CPA program areas (Open Space, Historical Preservation, Community Housing, and Recreation), and the allowed uses of CPA funds in the four areas.

Project Eligibility Determination Forms must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of the application deadlines. Please submit only one paper copy and mail to:

Community Preservation Committee
c/o Office of Planning and Development, Room 11, City Hall
City of Northampton
210 Main Street
Northampton, MA 01060

The Chair of the CPC or the Chair's designee will review Project Eligibility Determination Forms. Applicants will be notified as soon as possible (usually within a week of the project application deadline) whether their project is eligible for CPA funds. Applicants have the right to appeal eligibility decisions to the full Committee.

Applicants with questions may contact any member of the Community Preservation Committee or the Community Preservation Planner. Contact information is available on the Northampton Community Preservation website (<http://www.northamptonma.gov/gsuniverse/httpRoot/comm>).

Step 2. Submit Completed Application. Please review both the **Requirements for Submission** and **Application Instructions** before beginning an application. Applicants with questions are urged to contact the committee. Once submitted, an application may not be amended without a vote of the committee.

- Each project funding application must be submitted using the *Community Preservation Plan* "Project Application Cover Sheet." Additional pages should be added as necessary. The application and detailed instructions are part of the *Community Preservation Plan*, and are also available online at the CPC website.
- Applicants should submit 11 paper copies of the application, double-sided, plus an electronic copy whenever feasible.

- Submit applications to:

Community Preservation Committee
c/o Office of Planning and Development
210 Main Street, Room 11, City Hall
Northampton, MA 01060

Step 3. Community Preservation Committee Review and Public Comment

1. Application Review: The Community Preservation Committee will review submitted applications on the basis of the General Criteria for Project Evaluation and the program specific Project Evaluation Criteria for funding included in the *Community Preservation Plan*.

- The Committee may request additional or more detailed information, and further clarifications to the submitted proposals. The Committee may request a legal opinion to help it assess CPA project eligibility and to provide answers to any other questions that the Committee may have.

2. Project Review Meetings: The Committee will normally ask applicants or their representatives to meet with the Committee to discuss questions that members might have regarding their applications. These meetings will be publicly noticed.

3. Public Comment Session: Although members of the public may attend and speak at all meetings of the committee, the date of a formal Public Comment Session will be specified during each funding round. Applicants are especially encouraged to invite their supporters to attend this session and speak on behalf of their applications.

4. Notification: The Committee will notify applicants of its decisions concerning recommendations.

5. Committee Recommendations:

- a. The Committee will make its final recommendations for funding to the Mayor.
- b. The Committee reserves the right to attach conditions and to require additional agreements, such as preservation guarantees (see Appendix D), as part of a funding recommendation.
- c. The Committee may recommend a project as proposed by the applicant, or may modify the project, or it may recommend partial funding or funding for only a portion or phase of the proposed project. The Committee's recommendations may include detailed project scopes, conditions, and other specifications, as the Committee deems appropriate to ensure CPA compliance and project performance.

Step 4. Mayoral recommendation and City Council Vote

The Mayor will present the CPC's recommendations to the City Council, with or without her support. City Council has the final authority to award funds from Northampton's Community Preservation Act Fund. It may approve, approve but with a lower level of funding, or reject recommendations. The City Council takes two votes on each recommendation, normally at two successive Council meetings. Members of the public may speak in favor of or against specific recommendations at the Public session preceding each Council meeting.

Step 5. Award Letter

For projects approved by City Council, the Committee will issue award letters with information on the funding amount, funding conditions, project modification as voted by City Council (if any), Community Preservation staff contact information, and guidelines for project execution. Projects receiving CPA funding will be required to credit this source of funding in promotional materials and, whenever appropriate, at the project location. Signs indicating CPA support will be made available through the committee.

Step 6. Disbursement and Monitoring of Funds

CPA monies are public funds raised from dedicated Northampton tax revenues and from State subsidies. Projects financed with CPA funds must comply with all applicable State and municipal requirements. Funds are administered and disbursed by the City of Northampton according to city disbursement procedures.

Applicants should note especially that the State procurement law requires special procedures for the selection of products, vendors, services, and consultants.¹ For questions about procurements and other financial requirements and procedures applicants should contact the City Treasurer, George Zimmerman, at (413) 587-1296.

Project oversight, monitoring, and financial control are the responsibility of the Community Preservation Committee or its designee. Questions in these areas should be directed to Sarah LaValley, Community Preservation Planner, via email at slavalley@northamptonma.gov, or by calling (413) 587-1263.

The Committee may request project status updates from CPA Fund recipients. The purpose of such updates is to track the progress of funded projects, aid the Committee in refining the *Community Preservation Plan*, and identify issues that may assist future applicants.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION

The following requirements should be followed in preparing an application for CPA funding.

- Project funding applications should be for funding within a 5-year completion period. Applications for a longer funding period require a vote of the committee before they can be reviewed.
- If submitting multiple applications, a priority ranking of the projects should be indicated.
- An application for support of a project that requires preservation guarantees should specifically address how such a guarantee has been or is proposed to be accomplished (Appendix D)
- Applicants should include itemized project budgets, with details describing each item and its estimated cost.
- Applicants should obtain three professionally prepared quotes for project costs whenever possible. If such quotes are not available, detailed cost estimates may be used provided the basis of the estimates is fully explained.
- The property owner, when applicable, should sign applications.
- If the funding application is part of a larger project, the applicant should include the total project cost.